

Jeffrey Epstein

Jeffrey Edward Epstein (born January 20, 1953) is an American financier.^[1] He worked at **Bear Stearns** early in his career and subsequently formed his own firm, J. Epstein & Co. In 2008 Epstein was convicted of soliciting an underage girl for prostitution and served 18 months in prison for this.^[2] He is a registered sex offender.^{[1][3]}

1 Life

Born in **Brooklyn**, New York, Epstein attended **Lafayette High School**. He attended classes at **Cooper Union** from 1969 to 1971 and then at the **Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences** at NYU, leaving without a degree. From 1973 to 1975 he taught calculus and physics at the **Dalton School**, before becoming an options trader at **Bear Stearns**.^[4]

2 Financial career

Epstein began his financial career in 1976 as an options trader at **Bear Stearns**,^[4] where he worked in the special products division, advising high-net-worth clients on tax strategies.^[4] In 1980, Epstein became a partner at **Bear Stearns**.^[4] In 1982, Epstein founded his own financial management firm, J. Epstein & Co., managing the assets of clients with more than a billion dollars in net worth. In 1987, **Leslie Wexner**, founder and chairman of Ohio-based **The Limited** chain of women's clothing stores became a well-known client.^[4] Wexner acquired **Abercrombie & Fitch** the following year, and in 1992 converted a private school into an enormous residence that later became Epstein's in the wealthiest part of **Manhattan**, the **Upper East Side**. In 1996, Epstein changed the name of his firm to **The Financial Trust Company** and based it on the island of **St. Thomas** in the **U.S. Virgin Islands**.^[4]

In 2003, Epstein publicly bid for **New York** magazine. Other bidders were advertising executive **Donny Deutsch**, investor **Nelson Peltz**, media mogul and **New York Daily News** publisher **Mortimer Zuckerman**, and film producer **Harvey Weinstein**. They were ultimately outbid by longtime **Wall Street** investor **Bruce Wasserstein**, who paid \$55 million.^[5] In 2004, Epstein and Zuckerman committed up to \$25 million to finance **Radar**, a celebrity and pop culture magazine founded by **Maer Roshan**. Epstein and Zuckerman were equal partners in the venture, and Roshan, as its editor-in-chief, retained a small ownership

stake.^[6]

Since all but one of his financial clients are anonymous, it has been speculated that much of Epstein's lavish lifestyle was once financed by Wexner.^[4] In September 2002, he flew **Bill Clinton**, **Kevin Spacey** and **Chris Tucker** to Africa in his private **Boeing 727** to promote the former president's anti-AIDS efforts.^[4] He is also an old friend of **Prince Andrew**, **Duke of York**—they have stayed at each other's homes, and have vacationed together in Thailand. The prince was a guest in Epstein's New York residence for several days in December 2010, shortly after Epstein completed his Florida sentence for soliciting an underage girl. His dinner with Andrew at the mansion was also attended by (among others) **Katie Couric**, **George Stephanopoulos**, **Charlie Rose**, and **Woody Allen**.^[7] The 50,000-square-foot (4,600 m²) 9-story mansion is just off **Fifth Avenue** and overlooks the **Frick Collection**. It is reported to be the largest private residence in Manhattan, having originally been built as the **Birch Wathen School**.

Epstein also owns a villa in **Palm Beach**, Florida, an apartment in **Paris**, and a 10,000-acre ranch including a hill-top mansion in **Stanley**, **New Mexico**.^{[8][9]} He also owns a mansion with guest houses on his private island near **St. Thomas** called **Little Saint James**.

3 Science funding

In 2000 he established the **Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation**, which funds science research and education. Prior to 2003, Epstein's foundation funded Nowak's research at the **Institute for Advanced Study** at **Princeton University**.^{[4][10]} In May 2003, Epstein established the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics at Harvard University with a \$30 million gift to the university.^[11] Under the direction of **Martin Nowak**, the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics is a graduate department that studies the evolution of molecular biology with the use of mathematics, focusing on diseases such as cancer, HIV and other viruses.

The Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation has also funded genetic research leading towards advances in such fields as **Alzheimer's**, multiple sclerosis, ovarian cancer, breast cancer, colitis and **Crohn's disease**. Epstein has given funds to the **American Cancer Society**, for projects such as **CTC** technology, a blood test to identify genetic mutations to anti-inhibitor cancer drugs.^[12]

Epstein, in the past has associated with many well-known scientific personalities, such as **Gerald Edelman**, **Murray**

Gell-Mann, Stephen Hawking, Kip Thorne, Lawrence Krauss, Lee Smolin and Gregory Benford.^{[4][13][14]} In 2006, Epstein's foundations sponsored a conference on St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands with Hawking, Krauss, and Nobel laureates Gerard 't Hooft, David Gross and Frank Wilczek, covering such topics as unified gravity theory, neuroscience, the origins of language and global threats to the Earth.^[14]

More recently, the Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation has backed research into artificial intelligence; it has been supporting Marvin Minsky at MIT and Ben Goertzel in Hong Kong.^{[15][16]}

The extent of Epstein's claimed philanthropy is unknown since the Epstein's foundation fails to disclose information which other charities routinely disclose. Concerns have been raised over this and the New York Attorney General has been trying to get information.^[17]

4 Solicitation of prostitution

In March 2005, a woman contacted Palm Beach police and alleged her 14-year-old daughter had been taken to Jeffrey Epstein's mansion by an older girl and paid \$300 after stripping and massaging him.^[9] She had undressed, but left on her underwear.^[18]

Police started an 11-month undercover investigation of Epstein, followed by a search of his home. Subsequently, they alleged that Epstein had paid several escorts to perform sexual acts on him. Interviews with five alleged victims and seventeen witnesses under oath, a high school transcript and other items they found in Epstein's trash and home allegedly showed that some girls were under 18.^[19] A search of Epstein's home found large numbers of photos of girls throughout the house, some of whom had been interviewed earlier by the police.^[18] Papers filed in 2006 state Epstein installed concealed cameras in numerous places in his property to record sex between prominent people and underage prostitutes for criminal purposes like blackmail.^[20]

Epstein had set up a system of young women recruiting other women for his massage services.^[9] Two housekeepers stated to the police that Epstein would receive "massages" every day whenever he stayed in Palm Beach.^[18] In May 2006, Palm Beach police filed a probable cause affidavit saying that Epstein should be charged with four counts of unlawful sex with minors and one molestation count.^[18] His team of lawyers included Gerald Lefcourt, Alan Dershowitz and later also Kenneth Starr.^[9] Epstein passed a lie detector test in which he was asked whether he knew of the underage status of the girls—although lie detector tests are generally not admissible in a court of law.^{[21][22]}

Instead of following police recommendation, the prosecutors considered the evidence weak^[21] and presented it to a grand jury, an uncommon procedure in non-capital

cases. Former chief of Palm Beach police Michael Reiter later wrote to State Attorney Barry Krischer to complain of the state's "highly unusual" conduct and asked him to remove himself from the case.^[9] The grand jury returned only a single charge of felony solicitation of prostitution,^[23] to which Epstein pleaded not guilty in August 2006.^[24]

In June 2008, after pleading to a single state charge of soliciting prostitution from girls as young as 14,^[25] Epstein began serving an 18-month sentence. He served 13 months, and upon release became a registered sex offender.^{[3][26]} There is widespread controversy and suspicion that Epstein got off lightly.^[27]

After the accusations became public, several parties returned donations they had received from Epstein, including Eliot Spitzer, Bill Richardson,^[10] and the Palm Beach Police Department.^[19] Harvard announced that it would not return any money.^[10] A range of charitable donations Epstein had made financing children's education were also brought into question.^[25]

On June 18, 2010, Epstein's former butler, Alfredo Rodriguez, was sentenced to 18 months in jail for trying to sell a journal that he said recorded Epstein's activities. Special Agent Christina Pryor reviewed the material and agreed it was information "that would have been extremely useful in investigating and prosecuting the case, including names and contact information of material witnesses and additional victims."^{[28][29]} Epstein allegedly lent girls to powerful people to ingratiate himself with them and also to get possible blackmail information.^[27]

4.1 Virginia Roberts

Virginia Roberts alleges Epstein employed her, had sex with her, and trafficked her to rich and powerful friends including Prince Andrew and Dershowitz. Roberts asserts in an affidavit physical abuse more than once made her fear she might die. She alleges additionally that she delayed making her complaints because she feared what powerful friends of Epstein might do to her. Roberts believes she is in a "very dangerous circuit" and that Epstein or others might "come after" her because she is "standing up for what is right".^[30]

Roberts maintains other men also abused her but she is afraid to name them and her memories of physical mistreatment keep her fearful. Roberts repeated a longstanding claim that Epstein "debriefed" her after sexual encounters to get information useful for blackmail. She maintains Epstein knew about all the physical and sexual abuse from these debriefings. Roberts maintains Epstein pressured her go repeatedly with some people despite knowing how she hated sex with them.

The affidavit further alleges a cover up by the United States government and suggests the FBI gave Roberts reason to suspect strongly federal prosecutors may have

photographs and videotapes of underage sex between her and Epstein, also between her and Epstein's powerful friends.^[31] Roberts was allegedly encouraged to recruit other girls who were treated similarly to her. Roberts claims she was invited to visit Epstein when she was 15 years old and was his *sex slave* between 1999 and 2002. She said in an interview it was "made clear to [her] that [her] job was to do whatever pleased him" and she "wouldn't have dared object".^[32] Roberts alleges this traumatized her. Andrew, Epstein and Dershowitz all deny having sex with Roberts, and Dershowitz is taking legal action over the allegations.^{[33][34][35]} A diary purporting to be Roberts's has appeared online with a more detailed account of the alleged sex between Roberts and Andrew.^{[36][37]}

Roberts also alleges she would have got a mansion and a monthly income if she agreed to have Epstein's child. Roberts claims she would have been allowed to look after the child only so long as, "nothing [unspecified] happened" between Epstein and her, if "anything [unspecified] happened" the child would be his.^{[38][39]}

When aged 14 Roberts made sex assault allegations against two boys which the police were unable to prove. One of her present lawyers Sigrid McCawley stated, "'For the prosecutors to describe her as not credible means only that they did not think they had sufficient evidence to win. But she was raped. Blaming a girl, who at age 14 had been sexually abused, and who finally went to the police for help, is both wrong and hurtful.'"^[40]

An alternative account published in the *New York Daily News* suggests Roberts participated willingly in Epstein's activities and enjoyed having large amounts of cash at a young age. Conceivably Roberts may have been paid generously but also may have been threatened and pressured to carry on. Anthony Figueroa, former boyfriend of Roberts says, "She tried to stop [her way of life] before, but ended up getting dragged back into it," Roberts may have been subject to duress, to dependence on sex or money or to all three combined but she clearly had serious problems aged 15 to 17.^[41]

Her lawyers claim none of this refutes the contention that a child predator victimized Roberts, Sigrid McCawley commented, "To say that our client acquiesced in this abuse, or that the abuse was OK because she was paid for it — leaves out the fact that this is why we have laws in the United States to protect minor children who are groomed and sexually trafficked by adults"^[42]

The BBC television series, *Panorama* plans a thorough investigation of the scandal^[43] though as of early 2015 no law court has tested these claims.^[44]

On April 7, 2015, a judge in Florida ruled that the allegations made by Roberts against Prince Andrew should be struck from the record.^[45]

4.2 Civil lawsuits

On February 6, 2008, an anonymous Virginia woman filed a \$50 million civil lawsuit^[46] in federal court against Epstein, alleging that when she was a 16-year-old minor in 2004–2005, she was "recruited to give Epstein a massage." After being brought to his Palm Beach mansion, she claims that he exposed himself and had sexual intercourse with her, and paid her \$200 immediately afterward.^[23] A similar \$50 million suit was filed by a different woman in March 2008 who was represented by the same lawyer.^[47] Several of these lawsuits were dismissed and all other lawsuits were settled out of court.^[48] Epstein has so far made 17 out-of-court settlements, and some cases are ongoing.^[49] A December 30, 2014 filing in a federal civil suit in Florida against the United States for violations of the *Crime Victims' Rights Act* in agreeing to the 2008 plea accuses Dershowitz of sexually abusing a minor provided by Epstein.^[50] (See *Two Jane Does v. United States*.) A court document alleges that Epstein ran a "sexual abuse ring", and loaned underage girls to "prominent American politicians, powerful business executives, foreign presidents, a well-known prime minister, and other world leaders"^[51]

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6 External links

- Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation (discontinued)
- Collected news and commentary at *The New York Times*
- Collected news at the *New York Daily News*

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